AN ANTHOLOGY OF ENGLISH VERSE

FOR SENIOR SCHOOLS

BOOK I

BY

F. F. POTTER, M.A., B.Sc. (Lond.)

AND

JOAN BARBARA POTTER

1/6

Mr. B. G. Poole.

AN ANTHOLOGY OF ENGLISH VERSE
FOR SENIOR SCHOOLS

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BOOK I

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FOREWORD

THESE new Anthologies have been compiled to meet the needs of schools as now reorganized on the lines of the well-known "Hadow" Report. Thus the Junior Anthology, arranged in four parts, is intended for children up to transfer age of 11 +, while the Senior Anthology, also in four parts, is intended for pupils from the age of eleven onwards, and should be suitable for Modern, Senior, Central, and Secondary Schools of every kind.

Two principles only have guided the compilers in selecting poems and verses for inclusion: (*a*) their literary merit, (*b*) their suitability for pupils of the ages indicated above. The table of contents in each part will indicate the arrangement adopted in grouping the poems, which will be found to be under "subject" headings rather than in chronological sequence.

A special feature of the books is the amount of copyright material included, thus enabling the Anthologies to be representative of both the modern and the older poets. Teachers will therefore be able to find old favourites of acknowledged worth side by side with outstanding examples of the work of modern poets of the last two or three decades.

Each part contains ample material for a year's work, and we hope that teachers and pupils alike will find these books not only instructive but sources of permanent enjoyment.

F. F. POTTER.
J. B. POTTER.

CHESTER, 1930

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

We are most cordially grateful to the following authors, publishers, and owners of copyright, for permission to print the poems named below. In a few cases we have been quite unable to trace the owners of possible copyrights, and we take this opportunity of tendering our apologies to any owners whose rights may have been unwittingly infringed.

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CONTENTS

I. Nature Poems		PAGE
Old English Song		7
Song on May Morning	*J. Milton*	7
The Spring	*T. Carew*	7
To Daffodils	*R. Herrick*	8
The Shepherd's Home	*W. Shenstone*	8
To the Cuckoo	*J. Logan*	9
Sudden Shower	*J. Clare*	10
I Wandered Lonely as a Cloud	*W. Wordsworth*	10
Signs of Rain	*E. Jenner*	11
To Spring	*W. Blake*	12
Home-thoughts from Abroad	*R. Browning*	13
The Frost Spirit	*J. G. Whittier*	14
An Autumn Night	*A. Tennyson*	14
Blackbird	*J. Drinkwater*	15
II. Descriptive Poems		
The Bees	*W. Shakespeare*	16
To a Mouse	*R. Burns*	16
November	*T. Hood*	18
Abou Ben Adhem	*L. Hunt*	18
The Cataract of Lodore	*R. Southey*	19
The Lake	*M. Arnold*	22
The World	*W. B. Rands*	22
The Oxen	*T. Hardy*	23
The Miller's Song	*P. Tennant*	24
The Toll-gate House	*J. Drinkwater*	24
The Elfin Artist	*A. Noyes*	25
Sheep	*W. H. Davies*	26
The Windmill	*R. Bridges*	26
Lone Dog	*I. R. McLeod*	27
The Scarecrow	*W. de la Mare*	28
III. Songs and Lyrics		
It was a Lover and his Lass	*W. Shakespeare*	29
Winter	*W. Shakespeare*	29
How Sweet I Roam'd	*W. Blake*	30
A Wish	*S. Rogers*	30
The Burial of Sir John Moore	*C. Wolfe*	31

CONTENTS

		PAGE
Reverie of Poor Susan	*W. Wordsworth*	32
Canadian Boat Song	*T. Moore*	33
The Soldier's Dream	*T. Campbell*	33
The Splendour Falls on Castle Walls	*A. Tennyson*	34
Eldorado	*E. A. Poe*	35
All's Well	*C. Dibdin*	35
Aladdin	*J. R. Lowell*	36
The Warden of the Cinque Ports	*H. W. Longfellow*	36
The Three Fishers	*C. Kingsley*	38
Pan	*E. H. Moore*	39
The Shepherdess	*A. Meynell*	39
The Road to Maresfield	*A. Poyser*	40
Rags and Bones	*S. O'Sullivan*	40
The Fiddler of Dooney	*W. B. Yeats*	41
Every One Sang	*S. Sassoon*	41
Dabbling in the Dew		42

IV. SEA POEMS

Rule Britannia!	*J. Thomson*	43
The Mirror	*T. Campbell*	44
The Fisherman's Song	*J. Baillie*	44
Tom Bowling	*C. Dibdin*	45
The Parrot	*T. Campbell*	45
The Loss of the "Royal George"	*W. Cowper*	46
The Inchcape Rock	*R. Southey*	47
The Old Navy	*F. Marryat*	49
Loss of the "Birkenhead"	*F. H. Doyle*	50
Old Ironsides	*O. W. Holmes*	51
A Visit from the Sea	*R. L. Stevenson*	52
Sea Fever	*J. Masefield*	53

V. NARRATIVES. GRAVE AND GAY.

Boadicea	*W. Cowper*	54
The Well of St. Keyne	*R. Southey*	55
Bishop Hatto	*R. Southey*	57
The Priest and the Mulberry-Tree	*T. L. Peacock*	59
The Wise Men of Gotham	*T. L. Peacock*	60
The Monk Felix	*H. W. Longfellow*	61
The Jackdaw of Rheims	*R. H. Barham*	65
The Quangle Wangle's Hat	*E. Lear*	69
Father Gilligan	*W. B. Yeats*	71

I. NATURE POEMS

OLD ENGLISH SONG

Oh, for a book and a shady nook
  Either in-a-door or out,
With the green leaves whispering overhead
  Or the street cry all about,
Where I may read all at my ease,
  Both of the new and old;
For a jolly good book whereon to look
  Is better to me than gold.

SONG ON MAY MORNING

Now the bright morning-star, Day's harbinger,
Comes dancing from the east, and leads with her
The flowery May, who from her green lap throws
The yellow cowslip and the pale primrose.
  Hail, bounteous May, that dost inspire
  Mirth, and youth, and warm desire!
  Woods and groves are of thy dressing;
  Hill and dale doth boast thy blessing.
Thus we salute thee with our early song,
And welcome thee, and wish thee long.

J. Milton.

THE SPRING

Now that the winter's gone, the earth has lost
Her snow-white robes; and now no more the frost
Candies the grass, or casts an icy cream
Upon the silver lake, or crystal stream.

But the warm sun thaws the benumbed earth
And makes it tender, gives a second birth
To the dead swallows; wakes in hollow tree
The drowsy cuckoo, and the humble bee.

Now do a choir of chirping minstrels bring
In triumph to the world the youthful spring:
The valleys, hills, and woods in rich array
Welcome the coming of the longed-for May.

T. Carew.

TO DAFFODILS

Fair Daffodils, we weep to see
You haste away so soon:
As yet the early rising Sun
Has not attain'd his noon.
Stay, stay,
Until the hasting day
Has run
But to the even-song;
And, having pray'd together, we
Will go with you along.

We have short time to stay, as you,
We have as short a Spring;
As quick a growth to meet decay
As you, or any thing.
We die,
As your hours do, and dry
Away
Like to the Summer's rain;
Or as the pearls of morning's dew,
Ne'er to be found again.

R. Herrick.

THE SHEPHERD'S HOME

My banks they are furnished with bees,
Whose murmur invites one to sleep;
My grottoes are shaded with trees,
And my hills are white over with sheep.
I seldom have met with a loss,
Such health do my fountains bestow,
My fountains all bordered with moss,
Where the harebells and violets blow.

Not a pine in the grove is there seen,
But with tendrils of woodbine is bound;
Not a beech's more beautiful green,
But a sweet-brier entwines it around.
Not my fields in the prime of the year
More charms than my cattle unfold;
Not a brook that is limpid and clear,
But it glitters with fishes of gold.

I have found out a gift for my fair,
I have found where the wood-pigeons breed;
But let me such plunder forbear,
She will say 'twas a barbarous deed;
For he ne'er could be true, she averred,
Who would rob a poor bird of its young;
And I loved her the more when I heard
Such tenderness fall from her tongue.

W. SHENSTONE.

TO THE CUCKOO

Hail, beauteous stranger of the grove!
Thou messenger of spring!
Now Heaven repairs thy rural seat,
And woods thy welcome sing.

What time the daisy decks the green,
Thy certain voice we hear;
Hast thou a star to guide thy path,
Or mark the rolling year?

Delightful visitant! with thee
I hail the time of flowers,
And hear the sound of music sweet
From birds among the bowers.

The schoolboy, wandering through the wood
To pull the primrose gay,
Starts, the new voice of spring to hear,
And imitates thy lay.

What time the pea puts on the bloom,
Thou fliest thy vocal vale,
An annual guest in other lands,
Another spring to hail.

Sweet bird! thy bower is ever green
Thy sky is ever clear;
Thou hast no sorrow in thy song,
No winter in thy year:

Oh, could I fly, I'd fly with thee!
We'd make, with joyful wing,
Our annual visit o'er the globe,
Companions of the spring.

J. Logan.

SUDDEN SHOWER

Black grows the southern sky, betokening rain,
And humming hive-bees homeward hurry by:
They feel the change; so let us shun the grain,
And take the broad road while our feet are dry.
Ay there, some drops fell moistening on my face.
And pattering on my hat—'tis coming nigh!—
Let's look about, and find a sheltering place.
The little things around us fear the sky,
And hasten through the grass to shun the shower,
Here stoops an ash-tree—hark! the wind gets high,
But never mind; this ivy, for an hour,
Rain as it may, will keep us drily here:
That little wren knows well his sheltering bower,
Nor leaves his covert, though we come so near.

J. Clare.

I WANDERED LONELY AS A CLOUD

I wandered lonely as a cloud
That floats on high o'er vales and hills,
When all at once I saw a crowd,
A host, of golden daffodils;
Beside the lake, beneath the trees,
Fluttering and dancing in the breeze.

Continuous as the stars that shine
And twinkle on the milky way,
They stretched in never-ending line
Along the margin of a bay;
Ten thousand saw I at a glance
Tossing their heads in sprightly dance.

The waves beside them danced; but they
Out-did the sparkling waves in glee:
A poet could not but be gay,
In such a jocund company;
I gazed—and gazed—but little thought
What wealth the show to me had brought.

For oft, when on my couch I lie
In vacant or in pensive mood,
They flash upon that inward eye
Which is the bliss of solitude;
And then my heart with pleasure fills
And dances with the daffodils.

W. WORDSWORTH.

SIGNS OF RAIN

The hollow winds begin to blow,
The clouds look black, the glass is low,
The soot falls down, the spaniels sleep,
The spiders from their cobwebs peep:
Last night the sun went pale to bed,
The moon in halos hid her head;
The boding shepherd heaves a sigh,
For, see, a rainbow spans the sky;
The walls are damp, the ditches smell,
Closed is the pink-eyed pimpernel.
Hark how the chairs and tables crack!
Old Betty's joints are on the rack;
Loud quack the ducks, the peacocks cry,
The distant hills are seeming nigh.

How restless are the snorting swine;
The busy flies disturb the kine;
Low o'er the grass the swallow wings,
The cricket too, how sharp he sings;
Puss on the hearth, with velvet paws,
Sits wiping o'er her whiskered jaws.
Through the clear stream the fishes rise,
And nimbly catch the incautious flies.
The glow-worms, numerous and bright,
Illumed the dewy dell last night.
At dusk the squalid toad was seen,
Hopping and crawling o'er the green;
The whirling wind the dust obeys,
And in the rapid eddy plays;
The frog has changed his yellow vest,
And in a russet coat is dressed.
Though June, the air is cold and still,
The mellow blackbird's voice is shrill.
My dog, so altered in his taste,
Quits mutton-bones on grass to feast;
And see yon rooks, how odd their flight,
They imitate the gliding kite,
And seem precipitate to fall,
As if they felt the piercing ball.
'T will surely rain, I see with sorrow,
Our jaunt must be put off to-morrow.

E. Jenner.

TO SPRING

O thou with dewy locks, who lookest down
Through the clear windows of the morning, turn
Thine angel eyes upon our western isle,
Which in full choir hails thy approach, O Spring!

The hills tell one another, and the listening
Valleys hear; all our longing eyes are turned
Up to thy bright pavilions: issue forth
And let thy holy feet visit our clime!

Come o'er the eastern hills, and let our winds
Kiss thy perfumed garments; let us taste
Thy morn and evening breath; scatter thy pearls
Upon our lovesick land that mourns for thee.

O deck her forth with thy fair fingers; pour
Thy soft kisses on her bosom; and put
Thy golden crown upon her languish'd head,
Whose modest tresses are bound up for thee.

W. Blake.

HOME-THOUGHTS FROM ABROAD

Oh, to be in England
Now that April's there,
And whoever wakes in England
Sees, some morning, unaware,
That the lowest boughs, and the brushwood sheaf
Round the elm-tree bole are in tiny leaf,
While the chaffinch sings on the orchard bough
In England—now!

And after April, when May follows,
And the whitethroat builds and all the swallows!
Hark, where my blossomed pear-tree in the hedge
Leans to the field, and scatters on the clover
Blossoms and dewdrops—at the bent spray's edge—
That's the wise thrush; he sings each song twice over,
Lest you should think he never could recapture
The first fine careless rapture!
And though the fields look rough with hoary dew,
All will be gay when noontide wakes anew
The buttercups, the little children's dower—
Far brighter than this gaudy melon-flower!

R. Browning.

THE FROST SPIRIT

He comes,—he comes,—the Frost Spirit comes! You may trace his footsteps now
On the naked woods and the blasted fields and the brown hill's withered brow.
He has smitten the leaves of the grey old trees where their pleasant green came forth,
And the winds which follow wherever he goes, have shaken them down to earth.

He comes, — he comes, — the Frost Spirit comes! — from the frozen Labrador,—
From the icy ridge of the Northern seas, which the white bear wanders o'er,—
Where the fisherman's sail is stiff with ice, and the luckless forms below
In the sunless cold of the lingering night into marble statues grow.

He comes,—he comes,—the Frost Spirit comes!—and the quiet lake shall feel
The torpid touch of his glazing breath, and ring to the skater's heel;
And the streams which danced on the broken rocks, or sang to the leaning grass,
Shall bear again their winter chain, and in mournful silence pass.

J. G. Whittier.

AN AUTUMN NIGHT

Lo, in the middle of the wood,
The folded leaf is woo'd from out the bud
With winds upon the branch, and there
Grows deep and broad, and takes no care,
Sun-steeped at noon, and in the moon
Nightly dew-fed; and turning yellow
Falls, and floats adown the air.
Lo! sweetened with the summer light,
The full-juiced apples, waxing over mellow,
Drop in a silent autumn night.

A. Tennyson.

BLACKBIRD

He comes on chosen evenings,
My blackbird bountiful, and sings
Over the gardens of the town
Just at the hour the sun goes down.
His flight across the chimneys thick,
By some divine arithmetic,
Comes to his customary stack,
And couches there his plumage black,
And there he lifts his yellow bill,
Kindled against the sunset, till
These suburbs are like Dymock woods
Where music has her solitudes,
And while he mocks the winter's wrong
Rapt on his pinnacle of song,
Figured above our garden plots
Those are celestial chimney-pots.

J. DRINKWATER.

II. DESCRIPTIVE POEMS

THE BEES

(From Henry V)

So work the honey-bees,
Creatures that by a rule in nature teach
The act of order to a peopled kingdom.
They have a king and officers of sorts;
Where some, like magistrates, correct at home,
Others, like merchants, venture trade abroad,
Others, like soldiers, armed in their stings,
Make boot upon the summer's velvet buds,
Which pillage they with merry march bring home
To the tent-royal of their emperor;
Who, busied in his majesty, surveys
The singing masons building roofs of gold;
The civil citizens kneading up the honey;
The poor mechanic porters crowding in
Their heavy burdens at his narrow gate;
The sad-ey'd justice, with his surly hum,
Delivering o'er to executors pale
The lazy yawning drone.

W. SHAKESPEARE.

TO A MOUSE

Wee, sleekit, cow'rin, tim'rous beastie,
O, what a panic's in thy breastie!
Thou need na start awa sae hasty,
Wi' bickering brattle!
I wad be laith to rin an' chase thee,
Wi' murd'ring pattle.

I'm truly sorry man's dominion,
Has broken nature's social union,
An' justifies that ill opinion,
Which makes thee startle
At me, thy poor, earth-born companion,
An' fellow-mortal!

I doubt na, whiles, but thou may thieve;
What then? poor beastie, thou maun live!
A daimen icker in a thrave
'S a sma' request;
I'll get a blessing wi' the lave,
An' never miss't!

Thy wee bit housie, too, in ruin!
Its silly wa's the win's are streaming!
An' naething, now, to big a new ane,
O' foggage green!
An' bleak December's winds ensuin,
Baith snell an' keen!

Thou saw the fields laid bare an' waste,
An' weary winter comin' fast,
An' cozie here, beneath the blast,
Thou thought to dwell—
Till crash! the cruel coulter past
Out thro' thy cell.

That wee bit heap o' leaves an' stibble,
Has cost thee mony a weary nibble!
Now thou's turned out, for a' thy trouble,
But house or hald,
To thole the winter's sleety dribble,
An' cranreuch cauld!

But Mousie, thou art no thy lane,
In proving foresight may be vain;
The best-laid schemes o' mice an' men
Gang aft agley,
An' lea'e us nought but grief an' pain,
For promis'd joy!

Still thou art blest, compar'd wi' me;
The present only toucheth thee:
But och! I backward cast my e'e,
On prospects drear!
An' forward, tho' I canna see,
I guess an' fear! R. Burns.

NOVEMBER

No sun—no moon!
No morn—no noon—
No dawn—no dusk—no proper time of day—
No sky—no earthly view—
No distance looking blue—
No road—no street—no "t'other side the way"—
No end to any Row—
No indications where the Crescents go—
No top to any steeple—
No recognitions of familiar people—
No courtesies for showing 'em—
No knowing 'em!—
No travelling at all—no locomotion—
No inkling of the way—no notion—
"No go"—by land or ocean—
No mail—no post—
No news from any foreign coast—
No Park—no Ring—no afternoon gentility—
No company—no nobility—
No warmth, no cheerfulness, no healthful ease,
No comfortable feel in any member—
No shade, no shine, no butterflies, no bees,
No fruits, no flowers, no leaves, no birds—
No—vember!

T. Hood.

ABOU BEN ADHEM

Abou Ben Adhem (may his tribe increase!)
Awoke one night from a deep dream of peace,
And saw within the moonlight in his room,
Making it rich, and like a lily in bloom,
An angel writing in a book of gold:
Exceeding peace had made Ben Adhem bold,
And to the presence in the room he said,
"What writest thou?"—The vision rais'd its head,
And with a look made of all sweet accord,
Answered, "The names of those who love the Lord."

"And is mine one?" said Abou. "Nay, not so,"
Replied the angel. Abou spake more low,
But cheerly still; and said, "I pray thee, then,
Write me as one who loves his fellow men."
The angel wrote and vanished. The next night,
It came again with a great wakening light
And show'd the names whom love of God had blest,
And lo! Ben Adhem's name led all the rest.

L. HUNT.

THE CATARACT OF LODORE

"How does the water
Come down at Lodore?"
My little boy ask'd me
Thus, once on a time;
And moreover he task'd me
To tell him in rhyme.
Anon at the word,
There first came one daughter,
And then came another,
To second and third
The request of their brother,
And to hear how the water
Comes down at Lodore,
With its rush and its roar,
As many a time
They had seen it before.
So I told them in rhyme,
For of rhymes I had store:
And 'twas in my vocation
That so I should sing
For their recreation
Because I was Laureate
To them and the King.

From its sources which well
In the Tarn on the fell;
From its fountains
In the mountains,

Its rills and its gills;
Through moss and through brake,
It runs and it creeps
For awhile, till it sleeps
In its own little Lake.
And thence at departing,
Awakening and starting,
It runs through the reeds
And away it proceeds,
Through meadow and glade,
In sun and in shade,
And through the wood's shelter,
Among crags in its flurry,
Helter-skelter,
Hurry-skurry.

Here it comes sparkling,
And there it lies darkling;
Here smoking and frothing,
Its tumult and wrath in,
Till in this rapid race
On which it is bent,
It reaches the place
Of its steep descent.

The Cataract strong
Then plunges along,
Striking and raging,
As if a war waging,
Its caverns and rocks among;
Rising and leaping,
Sinking and creeping,
Swelling and sweeping,
Showering and springing,
Flying and flinging,
Writhing and ringing,
Eddying and whisking,
Spouting and frisking,
Turning and twisting,
Around and around,
With endless rebound!

Smiting and fighting,
A sight to delight in;
Confounding, astounding,
Dizzying and deafening the ear with its sound.

Collecting, projecting,
Receding and speeding,
And shocking and rocking,
And darting and parting,
And threading and spreading,
And whizzing and hissing,
And dripping and skipping,
And hitting and splitting,
And shining and twining,
And rattling and battling,
And shaking and quaking,
And pouring and roaring,
And waving and raving,
And tossing and crossing,
And flowing and going,
And running and stunning,
And foaming and roaming,
And dinning and spinning,
And dropping and hopping,
And working and jerking,
And guggling and struggling,
And heaving and cleaving,
And moaning and groaning;
And glittering and frittering,
And gathering and feathering,
And whitening and brightening,
And quivering and shivering,
And hurrying and scurrying
And thundering and floundering;

Dividing and gliding and sliding,
And falling and brawling and sprawling,
And driving and riving and striving,
And sprinkling and twinkling and wrinkling,

And sounding and bounding and rounding,
And bubbling and troubling and doubling,
And grumbling and rumbling and tumbling,
And clattering and battering and shattering;

Retreating and beating and meeting and sheeting,
Delaying and straying and playing and spraying,
Advancing and prancing and glancing and dancing,
Recoiling, turmoiling, and toiling and boiling,
And gleaming and streaming and steaming and beaming,
And rushing and flushing and brushing and gushing,
And flapping and rapping and clapping and slapping,
And curling and whirling and purling and twirling,
And thumping and plumping and bumping and jumping,
And dashing and flashing and splashing and clashing;
And so never ending, but always descending,
Sounds and motions for ever and ever are blending,
All at once and all o'er, with a mighty uproar,
And in this way the Water comes down at Lodore

R. Southey.

THE LAKE

Raised are the dripping oars—
Silent the boat: the lake,
Lovely and soft as a dream,
Swims in the sheen of the moon,
The mountains stand at its head
Clear in the pure June night,
But the valleys are flooded with haze.

M. Arnold.

THE WORLD

Great, wide, beautiful, wonderful world,
With the wonderful water round you curled,
And the wonderful grass upon your breast—
World, you are beautifully drest.

The wonderful air is over me,
And the wonderful wind is shaking the tree,
It walks on the water and whirls the mills,
And talks to itself on the tops of the hills.

You friendly Earth! How far you go,
With the wheat-fields that nod, and the rivers that flow,
With cities and gardens, and cliffs and isles,
And people upon you for thousands of miles?

Ah! You are so great, and I am so small,
I tremble to think of you, World, at all;
And yet when I said my prayers to-day,
A whisper inside me seemed to say,
"You are more than the Earth, though you are such a dot;
You can love and think, and the Earth can not!"

W. B. RANDS.

THE OXEN

Christmas Eve, and twelve of the clock,
"Now they are all on their knees,"
An elder said as we sat in a flock
By the embers in hearthside ease.

We pictured the meek, mild creatures where
They dwelt in their strawy pen,
Nor did it occur to one of us there
To doubt they were kneeling then.

So fair a fancy few would weave
In these years. Yet, I feel,
If some one said on Christmas Eve,
"Come; see the oxen kneel

"In the lonely barton by yonder coomb
Our childhood used to know,"
I should go with him in the gloom,
Hoping it might be so.

T. HARDY.

THE MILLER'S SONG

Full many a night in the clear moonlight
Have I wandered by valley and down,
Where owls fly low, and hoot as they go—
The white-wing'd owl, and the brown.
For it's up and away ere the dawn of the day,
When the glow-worm shines in the grasses,
And the dusk lies cool on the reed-set pool,
And the night wind passes.

Full many a day have I found my way
Where the long road winds round the hill,
Where the wind blows free, on a juniper lea,
To the tune and the clank of a mill.
For the miller's a man who must work while he can
With the rye, and the barley growing,
While the slow wheels churn, and the great sails turn,
To the fresh wind, blowing.

P. Tennant.

THE TOLL-GATE HOUSE

The toll-gate's gone, but still stands lone,
In the dip of the hill, the house of stone;
And over the roof in the branching pine
The great owl sits in the white moonshine.
An old man lives, and lonely, there,
His windows yet on the cross-roads stare,
And on Michaelmas night in all the years
A galloping far and faint he hears. . . .
His casement open wide he flings
With "Who goes there?" and a lantern swings . . .
But never more in the dim moonbeam
Than a cloak and a plume and the silver gleam
Of passing spurs in the night can he see,
For the toll-gate's gone and the road is free.

J. Drinkwater.

THE ELFIN ARTIST

In a glade of an Elfin forest,
When Sussex was Eden-new,
I came on an elfin painter,
And watched as his picture grew.
A harebell nodded beside him,
He dipped his brush in the dew.

And it might be the wild thyme round him
That shone in that dark strange ring;
But his brushes were bees' antennæ,
His knife was a wasp's blue sting;
And a gorgeous exquisite palette
Was a butterfly's fan-shaped wing.

And he mingled its powdery colours,
And painted the lights that pass,
On a delicate cobweb canvas
That gleamed like a magic glass,
And bloomed like a banner of elf-land,
Between two stalks of grass;

Till it shone like an angel's feather
With sky-born opal and rose,
And gold from the foot of the rainbow,
And colour that no man knows;
And I laughed in the sweet May weather
Because of the themes he chose.

For he painted the things that matter,
The tints that we all pass by,
Like the little blue wreaths of incense
That the wild thyme breathes in the sky;
Or the first white bud of the hawthorn,
And the light in a blackbird's eye.

And the shadows on soft white cloud-peaks
That carolling skylarks throw—
Dark blots on the slumbering splendours
That under the wild wings flow,
Wee shadows like violets trembling
On the unseen breasts of snow;

With petals too lovely for colour,
That shake to the rapturous wings,
And grow as the bird draws near them.
And die as he mounts and sings—
Ah, only those exquisite brushes
Could paint these marvellous things.

A. Noyes.

SHEEP

When I was once in Baltimore
A man came up to me and cried,
"Come, I have eighteen hundred sheep,
And we will sail on Tuesday's tide."

"If you will sail with me, young man,
I'll pay you fifty shillings down;
These eighteen hundred sheep I take
From Baltimore to Glasgow town."

He paid me fifty shillings down,
I sailed with eighteen hundred sheep;
We soon had cleared the harbour's mouth,
We soon were in the salt sea deep.

The first night we were out at sea
Those sheep were quiet in their mind;
The second night they cried with fear—
They smelt no pastures in the wind.

They sniffed, poor things, for their green fields,
They cried so loud I could not sleep:
For fifty thousand shillings down
I would not sail again with sheep.

W. H. Davies.

THE WINDMILL

The green corn waving in the dale,
The ripe grass waving on the hill;
I lean across the paddock pale
And gaze upon the giddy mill.

Its hurtling sails a mighty sweep
  Cut through the air: with rushing sound
Each strikes in fury down the steep,
  Rattles, and whirls in chase around.

Besides his sacks the miller stands
  On high within the open door:
A book and pencil in his hands,
  His grist and meal he reckoneth o'er.

His tireless merry slave, the wind,
  Is busy with his work to-day:
From whencesoe'er he comes to grind;
  He hath a will and knows the way.

He gives the creaking sails a spin,
  The circling millstones faster flee,
The shuddering timbers groan within,
  And down the shoot the meal runs free.

The miller giveth him no thanks,
  And doth not much his work o'erlook;
He stands beside the sacks, and ranks
  The figures in his dusty book.

R. Bridges.

LONE DOG

I'm a lean dog, a keen dog, a wild dog, and lone;
I'm a rough dog, a tough dog, hunting on my own;
I'm a bad dog, a mad dog, teasing silly sheep;
I love to sit and bay the moon, to keep fat souls from sleep.

I'll never be a lap dog, licking dirty feet,
A sleek dog, a meek dog, cringing for my meat,
Not for me the fireside, the well-filled plate,
But shut door, and sharp stone, and cuff, and kick, and hate.

Not for me the other dogs, running by my side,
Some have run a short while, but none of them would bide.
O mine is still the lone trail, the hard trail, the best,
Wide wind, and wild stars, and the hunger of the quest!

I. R. McLeod.

THE SCARECROW

All winter through I bow my head
  Beneath the driving rain;
The North wind powders me with snow
  And blows me black again;
At midnight under a maze of stars
  I flame with glittering rime,
And stand, above the stubble, stiff
  As mail at morning-prime.
But when that child, called Spring, and all
  His host of children, come,
Scattering their buds and dew upon
  These acres of my home,
Some rapture in my rags awakes;
  I lift void eyes and scan
The skies for crows, those ravening foes
  Of my strange master, Man.
I watch him striding lank behind
  His clashing team, and know
Soon will the wheat swish body high
  Where once lay sterile snow;
Soon shall I gaze across a sea
  Of sun-begotten grain,
Which my unflinching watch hath sealed
  For harvest once again.

W. de la Mare.

III. SONGS AND LYRICS

IT WAS A LOVER AND HIS LASS

It was a lover and his lass,
With a hey, and a ho, and a hey nonino!
That o'er the green corn-field did pass
In the Spring time, the only pretty ring time,
When birds do sing, hey ding a ding, ding;
Sweet lovers love the Spring.

Between the acres of the rye,
With a hey, and a ho, and a hey nonino!
These pretty country folks would lie,
In Spring time, etc.

This carol they began that hour,
With a hey, and a ho, and a hey nonino!
How that life was but a flower
In Spring time, etc.

And therefore take the present time,
With a hey, and a ho, and a hey nonino!
For love is crownèd with the prime
In Spring time, the only pretty ring time,
When birds do sing, hey ding a ding, ding;
Sweet lovers love the Spring.

W. SHAKESPEARE.

WINTER

When icicles hang by the wall,
And Dick the shepherd blows his nail,
And Tom bears logs into the hall,
And milk comes frozen home in pail,
When blood is nipped, and ways be foul,
Then nightly sings the staring owl,
Tu-who;
Tu-whit, tu-who—a merry note,
While greasy Joan doth keel the pot.

When all around the wind doth blow,
  And coughing drowns the parson's saw,
And birds sit brooding in the snow,
  And Marian's nose looks red and raw,
When roasted crabs hiss in the bowl,
Then nightly sings the staring owl,
    Tu-who;
Tu-whit, tu-who—a merry note,
While greasy Joan doth keel the pot.

W. SHAKESPEARE.

HOW SWEET I ROAMED

How sweet I roam'd from field to field
And tasted all the summer's pride,
Till I the Prince of Love beheld
Who in the sunny beams did glide!

He show'd me lilies for my hair,
And blushing roses for my brow;
He led me through his gardens fair
Where all his golden pleasures grow.

With sweet May dews my wings were wet,
And Phoebus fir'd my vocal rage;
He caught me in his silken net,
And shut me in his golden cage.

He loves to sit and hear me sing,
Then, laughing, sports and plays with me;
Then stretches out my golden wing,
And mocks my loss of liberty.

W. BLAKE.

A WISH

Mine be a cot beside the hill;
  A bee-hive's hum shall soothe my ear;
A willowy brook, that turns a mill,
  With many a fall shall linger near.

The swallow, oft, beneath my thatch
  Shall twitter from her clay-built nest;
Oft shall the pilgrim lift the latch,
  And share my meal, a welcome guest.

Around my ivied porch shall spring
  Each fragrant flower that drinks the dew;
And Lucy, at her wheel, shall sing
  In russet-gown and apron blue.

The village church among the trees,
  Where first our marriage-vows were given,
With merry peals shall swell the breeze,
  And point with taper spire to Heaven.

S. Rogers.

THE BURIAL OF SIR JOHN MOORE

Not a drum was heard, not a funeral note,
  As his corpse to the rampart we hurried;
Not a soldier discharged his farewell shot
  O'er the grave where our hero we buried.

We buried him darkly at dead of night,
  The sods with our bayonets turning,
By the struggling moonbeam's misty light,
  And the lantern dimly burning.

No useless coffin enclosed his breast,
  Nor in sheet nor in shroud we wound him;
But he lay like a warrior taking his rest
  With his martial cloak around him.

Few and short were the prayers we said,
  And we spoke not a word of sorrow;
But we steadfastly gazed on the face of the dead,
  And we bitterly thought of the morrow.

We thought, as we hollowed his narrow bed,
  And smoothed down his lonely pillow,
How the foe and the stranger would tread o'er his head,
  And we far away on the billow!

Lightly they'll talk of the spirit that's gone,
And o'er his cold ashes upbraid him;
But little he'll reck, if they let him sleep on,
In the grave where a Briton has laid him.

But half of our heavy task was done,
When the clock struck the hour for retiring;
And we heard the distant and random gun
That the foe was sullenly firing.

Slowly and sadly we laid him down
From the field of his fame fresh and gory;
We carved not a line, and we raised not a stone—
But we left him alone with his glory.

C. Wolfe.

REVERIE OF POOR SUSAN

At the corner of Wood Street, when daylight appears,
Hangs a thrush that sings loud,—it has sung for three years.
Poor Susan has passed by the spot, and has heard
In the silence of morning the song of the bird.

'Tis a note of enchantment: what ails her? She sees
A mountain ascending, a vision of trees;
Bright volumes of vapour through Lothbury glide,
And a river flows on through the vale of Cheapside.

Green pastures she views in the midst of the dale,
Down which she so often has tripped with her pail;
And a single small cottage, a nest like a dove's,
The one only dwelling on earth that she loves.

She looks, and her heart is in heaven: but they fade,
The mist and the river, the hill and the shade;
The stream will not flow, and the hill will not rise,
And the colours have all passed away from her eyes.

W. Wordsworth.

CANADIAN BOAT SONG

Faintly as tolls the evening chime,
Our voices keep tune and our oars keep time.
Soon as the woods on shore look dim,
We'll sing at St. Ann's our parting hymn.
Row, brothers, row! the stream runs fast,
The rapids are near, and the daylight's past!

Why should we yet our sail unfurl?
There's not a breath the blue wave to curl!
But, when the wind blows off the shore,
Oh, sweetly we'll rest our weary oar.
Blow, breezes, blow! the stream runs fast!
The rapids are near, and the daylight's past!

Ottawa's tide! this trembling moon
Shall see us float o'er thy surges soon.
Saint of this green isle, hear our prayers,
O grant us cool heavens and favouring airs.
Blow, breezes, blow! the stream runs fast,
The rapids are near, and the daylight's past.

T. Moore.

THE SOLDIER'S DREAM

Our bugles sang truce—for the night-cloud had lowered
And the sentinel stars set their watch in the sky;
And thousands had sunk on the ground overpowered,
The weary to sleep, and the wounded to die.

When reposing that night on my pallet of straw,
By the wolf-scaring faggot that guarded the slain,
At the dead of the night a sweet vision I saw,
And thrice ere the morning I dreamt it again.

Methought from the battlefield's dreadful array,
Far, far I had roamed on a desolate track;
'Twas autumn—and sunshine arose on the way
To the home of my fathers that welcomed me back.

I flew to the pleasant fields traversed so oft
In life's morning march, when my bosom was young;
I heard my own mountain-goats bleating aloft,
And knew the sweet strain that the corn-reapers sung.

Then pledged we the wine-cup, and fondly I swore
From my home and my weeping friends never to part;
My little ones kissed me a thousand times o'er,
And my wife sobbed aloud in her fullness of heart.

"Stay, stay with us—rest, thou art weary and worn";
And fain was their war-broken soldier to stay;
But sorrow returned with the dawning of morn,
And the voice in my dreaming ear melted away.

T. Campbell.

THE SPLENDOUR FALLS ON CASTLE WALLS

The splendour falls on castle walls
And snowy summits old in story:
The long light shakes across the lakes,
And the wild cataract leaps in glory.
Blow, bugle, blow, set the wild echoes flying,
Blow, bugle; answer, echoes, dying, dying, dying.

O hark, O hear! how thin and clear,
And thinner, clearer, farther going!
O sweet and far from cliff and scar
The horns of Elfland faintly blowing!
Blow, let us hear the purple glens replying:
Blow, bugle; answer, echoes, dying, dying, dying.

O love, they die in yon rich sky,
They faint on hill or field or river:
Our echoes roll from soul to soul,
And grow for ever and for ever.
Blow, bugle, blow, set the wild echoes flying,
And answers, echoes, answer, dying, dying, dying.

A. Tennyson.

ELDORADO

Gaily bedight
A gallant knight,
In sunshine and shadow
Had journeyed long,
Singing a song,
In search of Eldorado.

But he grew old—
This knight so bold,—
And o'er his heart a shadow
Fell as he found
No spot of ground
That looked like Eldorado.

And as his strength
Failed him at length,
He met a pilgrim shadow—
"Shadow," said he,
"Where can it be—
This land of Eldorado?"

"Over the mountains
Of the Moon
Down the Valley of the Shadow
Ride, boldly ride,"
The shade replied,—
"If you seek for Eldorado!"

E. A. Poe.

ALL'S WELL

Deserted by the waning moon,
When skies proclaim night's cheerless noon,
On tower, on fort, on tented ground,
The sentry walks his lonely round;
And should a footstep haply stray
Where caution marks the guarded way—
"Who goes there? Stranger, quickly tell."
"A friend." "The Word." "Good night"; "All's well."

Or sailing on the midnight deep,
When weary messmates soundly sleep,
The careful watch patrols the deck
To guard the ship from foes or wreck;
And while his thoughts oft homewards veer,
Some friendly voice salutes his ear—
"What cheer? Brother, quickly tell."
"Above." "Below." "Good night"; "All's well."

C. Dibdin.

ALADDIN

When I was a beggarly boy,
And lived in a cellar damp,
I had not a friend nor a toy,
But I had Aladdin's lamp;

Then I could not sleep for cold,
I had fire enough in my brain,
And builded with roofs of gold,
My beautiful castles in Spain!

Since then I have toiled day and night,
I have money and power good store,
But I'd give all my lamps of silver bright
For the one that is mine no more.

Take, Fortune, whatever you choose:
You gave, and may snatch again:
I have nothing 'twould pain me to lose,
For I own no more castles in Spain!

J. R. Lowell.

THE WARDEN OF THE CINQUE PORTS

A mist was driving down the British Channel,
The day was just begun,
And through the window-panes, on floor and panel,
Streamed the red autumn sun.

It glanced on flowing flag and rippling pennon,
And the white sails of ships;
And, from the frowning rampart, the black cannon
Hailed it with feverish lips.

Sandwich and Romney, Hastings, Hythe, and Dover
Were all alert that day,
To see the French war-steamers speeding over,
When the fog cleared away.

Sullen and silent, and like couchant lions,
Their cannon, through the night,
Holding their breath, had watched, in grim defiance,
The sea-coast opposite.

And now they roared at drum-beat from their stations
On every citadel;
Each answering each, with morning salutations,
That all was well.

And down the coast, all taking up the burden,
Replied the distant forts,
As if to summon from his sleep the Warden
And Lord of the Cinque Ports.

Him shall no sunshine from the fields of azure,
No drum-beat from the wall,
No morning gun from the black fort's embrasure
Awaken with its call!

No more surveying with an eye impartial
The long line of the coast,
Shall the gaunt figure of the old Field-Marshal
Be seen upon his post!

For in the night, unseen, a single warrior,
In sombre harness mailed,
Dreaded of man, and surnamed the Destroyer,
The rampart wall has scaled.

He passed into the chamber of the sleeper,
The dark and silent room,
And as he entered, darker grew, and deeper,
The silence and the gloom.

He did not pause to parley or dissemble,
But smote the Warden hoar;
Ah! what a blow! that made all England tremble,
And groan from shore to shore.

Meanwhile, without, the surly cannon waited,
The sun rose bright o'erhead;
Nothing in Nature's aspect intimated
That a great man was dead.

H. W. Longfellow.

THE THREE FISHERS

Three fishers went sailing away to the West,
Away to the West as the sun went down;
Each thought on the woman who loved him the best,
And the children stood watching them out of the town;
For men must work and women must weep,
And there's little to earn, and many to keep,
Though the harbour bar be moaning.

Three wives sat up in the lighthouse tower,
And they trimmed the lamps as the sun went down;
They looked at the squall, and they looked at the shower,
And the night-rack came rolling up ragged and brown.
But men must work and women must weep,
Though storms be sudden, and waters deep,
And the harbour bar be moaning.

Three corpses lay out on the shining sands
In the morning gleam as the tide went down,
And the women are weeping and wringing their hands
For those who will never come home to the town:
For men must work and women must weep,
And the sooner it's over, the sooner to sleep;
And good-bye to the bar and its moaning.

C. Kingsley.

PAN

Round and about the sordid street
With grimy face and dusty feet,
Tattered jacket, ragged vest,
And flaunting paper plume for crest,
Laughing lips and shining eyes
—Forget-me-nots from paradise—
And upturned nose impertinent,
With all his tawdry world content—
Pan, of his woodland haunts beguiled,
Is come again, a gutter child,
That lightly trips on twinkling toes,
And through a comb and paper blows
Fantastic music as he goes.

E. H. Moore.

THE SHEPHERDESS

She walks—the lady of my delight—
A shepherdess of sheep.
Her flocks are thoughts. She keeps them white;
She guards them from the steep;
She feeds them on the fragrant height,
And folds them in for sleep.

She roams maternal hills and bright,
Dark valleys safe and deep.
Into that tender breast at night
The chastest stars may peep.
She walks—the lady of my delight—
A shepherdess of sheep.

She holds her little thoughts in sight,
Though gay they run and leap.
She is so circumspect and right;
She has her soul to keep.
She walks—the lady of my delight—
A shepherdess of sheep.

A. Meynell.

THE ROAD TO MARESFIELD

I'm out on the road in the morning
When the heath is asparkle with dew,
And I shout for joy of the sunshine
And the heaven of cloudless blue.
Chorus—
Then away by Whitehouse Hill,
And down by Oldlands Hall,
How often I've strode on the Maresfield Road
From morn till evening fall.

I'm out on the road at the noontime
When the forest is all aglow,
For Autumn is lighting the heather
And laying the bracken low.
Chorus—

The forest air's keen in the winter
When the Downs are all mantled in white,
And the scent of the cold, grey Channel
Comes up with the shadows of night.
Chorus—

A. POYSER.

RAGS AND BONES

Gather 'em, gather 'em, gather 'em, O,
He shouts monotonous, jolting slow
His little truck of rags and bones
Over the uneven cobble stones.
Ever about him clink and crowd
The waifs, a many-coloured cloud
All shrilly clamouring, mad with joy,
For sticky sweet, or painted toy.
Hardly a breath is in the air,
Yet every little windmill there
Goes whirling wildly, as though it knew
With every turn what rapture flew
Through all the heavy street, and stirred
The stagnant air, till the sad bird
High on the wall takes heart to sing
And hails the simulated Spring.

S. O'SULLIVAN.

THE FIDDLER OF DOONEY

When I play on my fiddle in Dooney,
Folk dance like a wave of the sea;
My cousin is priest in Kilvarnet,
My brother in Moharabuiee.

I passed my brother and cousin:
They read in their books of prayer;
I read in my book of songs
I bought at the Sligo fair.

When we come at the end of time,
To Peter sitting in state,
He will smile on the three old spirits,
But call me first through the gate;

For the good are always the merry,
Save by an evil chance,
And the merry love the fiddle,
And the merry love to dance:

And when the folk there spy me,
They will all come up to me,
With "Here is the fiddler of Dooney!"
And dance like a wave of the sea.

W. B. Yeats.

EVERY ONE SANG

Every one suddenly burst out singing;
And I was filled with such delight
As prisoned birds must find in freedom
Winging wildly across the white
Orchards and dark green fields; on, on, and out of sight.

Every one's voice was suddenly lifted,
And beauty came like the setting sun.
My heart was shaken with tears, and horror
Drifted away. . . . O, but every one
Was a bird; and the song was wordless; the singing will never be done.

S. Sassoon.

DABBLING IN THE DEW

Oh, where are you going to, my pretty little dear,
With your red, rosy cheeks and your coal-black hair?
I'm going a milking, kind sir, she answered me:
For it's dabbling in the dew makes the milkmaids fair!

Suppose I were to clothe you, my pretty little dear,
In a green silken gown and the amethyst rare?
O no, sir, O no, sir, kind sir, she answered me,
For it's dabbling in the dew makes the milkmaids fair!

Suppose I were to carry you, my pretty little dear,
In a chariot with horses, a grey gallant pair,
O no, sir, O no, sir, kind sir, she answered me,
For it's dabbling in the dew makes the milkmaids fair!

Suppose I were to feast you, my pretty little dear,
With dainties on silver, the whole of the year?
O no, sir, O no, sir, kind sir, she answered me,
For it's dabbling in the dew makes the milkmaids fair!

But London's a city, my pretty little dear,
And all men are gallant and brave that are there—
O no, sir, O no sir, kind sir, she answered me,
For it's dabbling in the dew makes the milkmaids fair!

O fine clothes and dainties and carriages so rare
Bring grey to the cheeks and silver to the hair;
What's a ring on the finger if rings are round the eye?
But it's dabbling in the dew makes the milkmaids fair!

IV. SEA POEMS

RULE BRITANNIA!

When Britain first, at Heaven's command
  Arose from out the azure main,
This was the charter of the land,
  And guardian angels sung this strain:
"Rule, Britannia! rule the waves!
Britons never will be slaves."

The nations not so blest as thee
  Must in their turns to tyrants fall;
While thou shalt flourish great and free,
  The dread and envy of them all.

Still more majestic shalt thou rise,
  More dreadful from each foreign stroke;
As the loud blast that tears the skies
  Serves but to root thy native oak.

Thee haughty tyrants ne'er shall tame;
  All their attempts to bend thee down
Will but arouse thy generous flame,
  But work their woe and thy renown.

To thee belongs the rural reign;
  Thy cities shall with commerce shine;
All thine shall be the subject main,
  And every shore it circles thine!

The Muses, still with Freedom found,
  Shall to thy happy coast repair;
Blest Isle! with matchless beauty crowned,
  And manly hearts to guard the fair:—
"Rule, Britannia! rule the waves!
Britons never will be slaves!"

J. THOMSON.

THE MIRROR

O pleasant Sea!
Earth has not a plain
So boundless or so beautiful as thine.
The eagle's vision cannot take it in:
The lightning's wing, too weak to sweep its space,
Sinks half-way o'er it like a wearied bird.

It is the mirror of the stars, where all
Their hosts within the far-off firmament,
Gay marching to the music of the spheres,
Can see themselves at once.

T. CAMPBELL.

THE FISHERMAN'S SONG

No fish stir in our heaving net,
And the sky is dark and the night is wet;
And we must ply the lusty oar,
For the tide is ebbing from the shore;
And sad are they whose faggots burn,
So kindly stored for our return.

Our boat is small, and the tempest raves,
And nought is heard but the lashing waves
And the sullen roar of the angry sea
And the wild winds piping drearily;
Yet sea and tempest rise in vain,
We'll bless our blazing hearths again.

Pull bravely, mates! Our guiding star
Now from its towerlet streameth far,
And now along the nearing strand,
See, swiftly moves yon flaming brand.
Before the midnight watch be passed
We'll quaff our bowl and mock the blast.

J. BAILLIE.

TOM BOWLING

Here, a sheer hulk, lies poor Tom Bowling,
The darling of our crew;
No more he'll hear the tempest howling,
For death has broached him to.
His form was of the manliest beauty,
His heart was kind and soft,
Faithful, below, he did his duty;
But now he's gone aloft.

Tom never from his word departed,
His virtues were so rare;
His friends were many and true-hearted,
His Poll was kind and fair:
And then he'd sing so blithe and jolly,
Ah, many's the time and oft!
But mirth is turned to melancholy,
For Tom is gone aloft.

Yet shall poor Tom find pleasant weather,
When He, who all commands,
Shall give, to call life's crew together,
The word to pipe all hands.
Thus, Death, who kings and tars despatches,
In vain Tom's life has doff'd,
For, though his body's under hatches,
His soul has gone aloft.

C. Dibdin.

THE PARROT

A parrot from the Spanish Main,
Full young and early caged, came o'er
With bright wings, to the bleak domain
Of Mulla's shore.

To spicy groves where he had won
His plumage of resplendent hue,
His native fruits, and skies, and sun,
He bade adieu.

For these he changed the smoke of turf,
A heathery land and misty sky,
And turned on rocks and raging surf
His golden eye.

But, petted in our climate cold,
He lived and chattered many a day,
Until with age, from green and gold
His wings grew grey.

At last, when blind and seeming dumb,
He scolded, laughed, and spoke no more,
A Spanish stranger chanced to come
To Mulla's shore.

He hailed the bird in Spanish speech.
The bird in Spanish speech replied.
Flapped round the cage with joyous screech,
Dropt down and died.

T. CAMPBELL.

THE LOSS OF THE "ROYAL GEORGE"

Toll for the brave!
The brave that are no more!
All sunk beneath the wave,
Fast by their native shore!

Eight hundred of the brave,
Whose courage well was tried,
Had made the vessel heel,
And laid her on her side.

A land breeze shook the shrouds,
And she was overset;
Down went the *Royal George*,
With all her crew complete.

Toll for the brave!
Brave Kempenfelt is gone;
His last sea-fight is fought;
His work of glory done.

It was not in the battle;
No tempest gave the shock;
She sprang no fatal leak;
She ran upon no rock.

His sword was in its sheath;
His fingers held the pen,
When Kempenfelt went down
With twice four hundred men.

Weigh the vessel up,
Once dreaded by our foes!
And mingle with our cup
The tear that England owes.

Her timbers yet are sound,
And she may float again,
Full charged with England's thunder,
And plough the distant main.

But Kempenfelt is gone,
His victories are o'er;
And he and his eight hundred
Shall plough the wave no more.

W. COWPER.

THE INCHCAPE ROCK

No stir in the air, no stir in the sea,
The ship was still as she could be,
Her sails from heaven received no motion,
Her keel was steady in the ocean.

Without either sign or sound of their shock
The waves flow'd over the Inchcape Rock;
So little they rose, so little they fell,
They did not move the Inchcape Bell.

The Abbot of Aberbrothok
Had placed that bell on the Inchcape Rock;
On a buoy in the storm it floated and swung,
And over the waves its warning rung.

When the Rock was hid by the surge's swell,
The mariners heard the warning bell;
And then they knew the perilous Rock,
And blest the Abbot of Aberbrothok.

The Sun in heaven was shining gay,
All things were joyful on that day;
The sea-birds scream'd as they wheel'd round,
And there was joyaunce in their sound.

The buoy of the Inchcape Bell was seen
A darker speck on the ocean green;
Sir Ralph the Rover walk'd his deck,
And he fixed his eye on the darker speck.

He felt the cheering power of Spring,
It made him whistle, it made him sing;
His heart was mirthful to excess,
But the Rover's mirth was wickedness.

His eye was on the Inchcape float;
Quoth he, "My men, put out the boat,
And row me to the Inchcape Rock,
And I'll plague the Abbot of Aberbrothok."

The boat is lower'd, the boatmen row,
And to the Inchcape Rock they go;
Sir Ralph bent over from the boat,
And he cut the Bell from the Inchcape float.

Down sunk the Bell with a gurgling sound;
The bubbles rose and burst around;
Quoth Sir Ralph, "The next who comes to the Rock
Won't bless the Abbot of Aberbrothok."

Sir Ralph the Rover sail'd away,
He scour'd the seas for many a day;
And now grown rich with plunder'd store,
He steers his course for Scotland's shore.

So thick a haze o'erspreads the sky
They cannot see the Sun on high;
The wind hath blown a gale all day,
At evening it hath died away.

On the deck the Rover takes his stand,
So dark it is they see no land.
Quoth Sir Ralph, "It will be lighter soon,
For there is the dawn of the rising Moon."

"Canst hear," said one, "the breakers roar?
For methinks we should be near the shore."
"Now where we are I cannot tell,
But I wish I could hear the Inchcape Bell."

They hear no sound, the swell is strong;
Though the wind hath fallen they drift along,
Till the vessel strikes with a shivering shock,—
"Oh Christ! it is the Inchcape Rock!"

Sir Ralph the Rover tore his hair;
He curst himself in his despair;
The waves rush in on every side,
The ship is sinking beneath the tide.

But even in his dying fear
One dreadful sound could the Rover hear,
A sound as if with the Inchcape Bell,
The Devil below was ringing his knell.

R. Southey.

THE OLD NAVY

The captain stood on the carronade: "First lieutenant," says he,
"Send all my merry men aft here, for they must list to me;
I haven't the gift of the gab, my sons—because I'm bred to the sea;
That ship there is a Frenchman, who means to fight with we.
And odds bobs, hammer and tongs, long as I've been to sea,
I've fought against every odds—but I've gained the victory.

"That ship there is a Frenchman, and if we don't take she,
'Tis a thousand bullets to one, that she will capture we;
I haven't the gift of the gab, my boys, so each man to his gun;
If she's not mine in half an hour, I'll flog each mother's son.
For odds bobs, hammer and tongs, long as I've been to sea,
I've fought against every odds—and I've gained the victory!"

We fought for twenty minutes, when the Frenchman had enough;
"I little thought," said he, "that your men were of such stuff;"
Our captain took the Frenchman's sword, a low bow made to he;
"I haven't the gift of the gab, monsieur, but polite I wish to be.
And odds bobs, hammer and tongs, long as I've been to sea,
I've fought against every odds—and I've gained the victory!"

Our captain sent for all of us: "My merry men," said he,
"I haven't the gift of the gab, my lads, but yet I thankful be,
You've done your duty handsomely, each man stood to his gun;
If you hadn't, you villains, as sure as day, I'd have flogged each
mother's son.
For odds bobs, hammer and tongs, as long as I'm at sea,
I'll fight against every odds,—and I'll gain the victory.

F. MARRYAT.

LOSS OF THE BIRKENHEAD

Right on our flank the crimson sun went down,
The deep sea rolled around in dark repose,
When, like the wild shriek from some captured town,
A cry of women rose.

The stout ship Birkenhead lay hard and fast,
Caught, without hope, upon a hidden rock;
Her timbers thrilled as nerves, when thro' them passed
The spirit of that shock.

And ever like base cowards, who leave their ranks
In danger's hour, before the rush of steel,
Drifted away, disorderly, the planks,
From underneath her keel.

Confusion spread, for, though the coast seemed near,
Sharks hovered thick along that white sea brink.
The boats could hold?—not all—and it was clear
She was about to sink.

"Out with those boats, and let us haste away,"
Cried one, "ere yet yon sea the bark devours."
The man thus clamouring was, I scarce need say,
No officer of ours.

We knew our duty better than to care
For such loose babblers, and made no reply,
Till our good colonel gave the word, and there
Formed us in line to die.

There rose no murmur from the ranks, no thought,
By shameful strength, unhonoured life to seek;
Our post to quit we were not trained, nor taught
To trample down the weak.

So we made women with their children go,
The oars ply back again and yet again;
Whilst, inch by inch, the drowning ship sank low,
Still under steadfast men.

What follows why recall? The brave who died,
Died without flinching in the bloody surf;
They sleep as well, beneath that purple tide,
As others, under turf;—

They sleep as well, and, roused from their wild grave,
Wearing their wounds like stars, shall rise again,
Joint heirs with Christ, because they bled to save
His weak ones, not in vain.

If that day's work no clasp or medal mark,
If each proud heart no cross of bronze may press,
Nor cannon thunder loud from Tower and Park,
This feel we, none the less:

That those whom God's high grace there saved from ill—
Those also, left His martyrs in the bay—
Though not by siege, though not in battle, still
Full well had earned their pay.

F. H. Doyle.

OLD IRONSIDES

Ay, tear her tattered ensign down!
Long has it waved on high,
And many an eye has danced to see
That banner in the sky;
Beneath it rang the battle shout,
And burst the cannon's roar;
The meteor of the ocean air
Shall sweep the clouds no more!

Her deck, once red with heroes' blood,
Where knelt the vanquished foe,
When winds were hurrying o'er the flood,
And waves were white below,
No more shall feel the victor's tread,
Or know the conquered knee;—
The harpies of the shore shall pluck
The eagle of the sea!

O better that her shattered hulk
Should sink beneath the wave;
Her thunders shook the mighty deep,
And there should be her grave;
Nail to the mast her holy flag,
Set every threadbare sail,
And give her to the god of storms,
The lightning and the gale!

O. W. Holmes.

A VISIT FROM THE SEA

Far from the loud sea beaches
Where he goes fishing and crying,
Here in the inland garden
Why is the sea-gull flying?

Here are no fish to dive for;
Here is the corn and lea;
Here are the green trees rustling,
Hie away home to sea!

Fresh is the river water
And quiet among the rushes;
This is no home for the sea-gull,
But for the rooks and thrushes.

Pity the bird that has wandered!
Pity the sailor ashore!
Hurry him home to the ocean,
Let him come here no more!

High on the sea-cliff ledges
  The white gulls are trooping and crying;
Here among rooks and roses
  Why is the sea-gull flying?

R. L. Stevenson.

SEA FEVER

I must go down to the seas again, to the lonely sea and the sky,
And all I ask is a tall ship, and a star to steer her by;
And the wheel's kick and the wind's song and the white sail's shaking,
And a grey mist on the sea's face, and a grey dawn breaking.

I must go down to the seas again, for the call of the running tide
Is a wild call and a clear call that may not be denied;
And all I ask is a windy day with the white clouds flying,
And the flung spray and the blown spume, and the sea-gulls crying.

I must go down to the seas again, to the vagrant gypsy life,
To the gull's way and the whale's way, where the wind's like a whetted knife;
And all I ask is a merry yarn from a laughing fellow-rover,
And quiet sleep and a sweet dream when the long trick's over.

J. Masefield.

V. NARRATIVES

GRAVE AND GAY

BOADICEA

When the British warrior Queen,
  Bleeding from the Roman rods,
Sought, with an indignant mien,
  Counsel of her country's gods.

Sage beneath a spreading oak,
  Sat the Druid, hoary chief,
Every burning word he spoke
  Full of rage and full of grief.

"Princess! If our aged eyes
  Weep upon thy matchless wrongs,
'Tis because resentment ties
  All the terror of our tongues.

"Rome shall perish—write that word
  In the blood that she has spilt;
Perish, hopeless and abhorred,
  Deep in ruin as in guilt.

"Rome, for empire far renowned,
  Tramples on a thousand states;
Soon her pride shall kiss the ground—
  Hark! the Gaul is at her gates!

"Other Romans shall arise,
  Heedless of a soldier's name;
Sounds, not arms, shall win the prize,
  Harmony the path to fame.

"Then the progeny that springs
  From the forests of our land,
Armed with thunder, clad with wings,
  Shall a wider world command.

"Regions Cæsar never knew
Thy posterity shall sway;
Where his eagles never flew,
None invincible as they."

Such the bard's prophetic words,
Pregnant with celestial fire,
Bending as he swept the chords
Of his sweet but awful lyre.

She, with all a monarch's pride,
Felt them in her bosom glow:
Rushed to battle, fought, and died;
Dying, hurled them at the foe.

W. Cowper.

THE WELL OF ST. KEYNE

A well there is in the West Country,
And a clearer one never was seen;
There is not a wife in the West Country
But has heard of the Well of St. Keyne.

An oak and an elm tree stand beside
And behind doth an ash-tree grow,
And a willow from the bank above
Droops to the water below.

A traveller came to the Well of St. Keyne;
Joyfully he drew nigh,
For from cock-crow he had been travelling,
And there was not a cloud in the sky.

He drank of the water so cool and clear,
For thirsty and hot was he,
And he sat down upon the bank
Under the willow-tree.

There came a man from the house hard by
At the Well to fill his pail;
On the Well-side he rested it,
And he bade the stranger hail.

"Now art thou a bachelor, stranger?" quoth he,
"For an if thou hast a wife,
The happiest draught thou hast drunk this day
That ever thou didst in thy life.

"Or has thy good woman, if one thou hast,
Ever here in Cornwall been?
For an if she have, I'll venture my life
She has drunk of the Well of St. Keyne."

"I have left a good woman who never was here,"
The stranger he made reply,
"But that my draught should be the better for that,
I pray you answer me why?"

"St. Keyne," quoth the Cornish-man, "many a time
Drank of this crystal Well,
And before the angel summon'd her,
She laid on the water a spell.

"If the husband, of this gifted Well
Shall drink before his wife,
A happy man thenceforth is he,
For he shall be master for life.

"But if the wife shall drink of it first,
God help the husband then!"
The stranger stoopt to the Well of St. Keyne,
And drank of the water again.

"You drank of the Well I warrant betimes?"
He to the Cornish-man said:
But the Cornish-man smiled as the stranger spake,
And sheepishly shook his head.

"I hasten'd as soon as the wedding was done,
And left my wife in the porch;
But 'i faith she had been wiser than I,
For she took a bottle to church."

R. Southey.

BISHOP HATTO

The summer and autumn had been so wet
That in winter the corn was growing yet;
'Twas a piteous sight to see all around
The grain lie rotting on the ground.

Every day the starving poor
Crowded around Bishop Hatto's door;
For he had a plentiful last year's store,
And all the neighbourhood could tell
His granaries were furnished well.

At last Bishop Hatto appointed a day
To quiet the poor without delay;
He bade them to his great barn repair,
And they should have food for the winter there.

Rejoiced such tidings good to hear,
The poor folk flocked from far and near;
The great barn was full as it could hold,
Of women, and children, and young, and old.

Then when he saw it could hold no more,
Bishop Hatto he made fast the door;
And while for mercy on Christ they call,
He set fire to the barn, and burned them all.

"I' faith, 'tis an excellent bonfire!" quoth he,
"And the country is greatly obliged to me,
For ridding it, in these times forlorn,
Of rats, that only consume the corn."

So then to his palace returnèd he
And he sat down to supper merrily,
And he slept that night like an innocent man;
But Bishop Hatto never slept again.

In the morning as he entered the hall,
Where his picture hung against the wall,
A sweat like death all over him came,
For the rats had eaten it out of the frame.

As he looked there came a man from the farm;
He had a countenance white with alarm:
"My lord, I opened your granaries this morn,
And the rats had eaten all your corn."

Another came running presently,
And he was pale as pale could be:
"Fly! my Lord Bishop, fly," quoth he,
Ten thousand rats are coming this way—
The Lord forgive you for yesterday!"

"I'll go to my tower on the Rhine," replied he,
'Tis the safest place in Germany;
The walls are high, and the shores are steep,
And the stream is strong, and the water deep."

Bishop Hatto fearfully hastened away,
And he crossed the Rhine without delay,
And reached his tower, and barred with care
All the windows, door, and loopholes there.

He laid him down, and closed his eyes,
But soon a scream made him arise;
He started, and saw two eyes of flame
On his pillow from whence the screaming came.

He listened and looked; it was only the cat,
But the Bishop he grew more fearful for that,
For she sat screaming, mad with fear,
At the army of rats that was drawing near.

For they have swum over the river so deep,
And they have climbed the shores so steep,
And up the tower their way is bent
To do the work for which they were sent.

They are not to be told by the dozen or score,
By thousands they come, and by myriads and more;
Such numbers had never been heard of before,
Such a judgment had never been witnessed of yore.

Down on his knees the Bishop fell,
And faster and faster his beads he did tell,
As louder and louder drawing near
The gnawing of their teeth he could hear.

And in at the windows, and in at the door,
And through the walls helter-skelter they pour,
And down from the ceiling, and up through the floor,
From the right and the left, from behind and before,
From within and without, from above and below,
And all at once to the Bishop they go.

They have whetted their teeth against the stones,
And now they pick the Bishop's bones;
They gnawed the flesh from every limb,
For they were sent to do judgment on him.

R. SOUTHEY.

THE PRIEST AND THE MULBERRY-TREE

Did you hear of the curate who mounted his mare,
And merrily trotted along to the fair?
Of creature more tractable none ever heard:
In the height of her speed she would stop at a word;
But again with a word, when the curate said, "Hey,"
She put forth her mettle and galloped away.

As near to the gates of the city he rode,
While the sun of September all brilliantly glowed,
The good priest discover'd, with eyes of desire,
A mulberry-tree in a hedge of wild-brier;
On boughs long and lofty, in many a green shoot,
Hung, large, black, and glossy, the beautiful fruit.

The curate was hungry, and thirsty to boot;
He shrank from the thorns, though he longed for the fruit;
With a word he arrested his courser's keen speed,
And he stood up erect on the back of his steed;
On the saddle he stood while the creature stood still,
And he gathered the fruit till he took his good fill.

"Sure never," he thought, "was a creature so rare,
So docile, so true, as my excellent mare;
Lo, here now I stand," and he gazed all around,
"As safe and as steady as if on the ground;
Yet how had it been, if some traveller this way
Had, dreaming no mischief, but chanced to cry, 'Hey'?"

He stood with his head in the mulberry-tree,
And he spoke out aloud in his fond reverie;
At the sound of the word the good mare made a push,
And down went the priest in the wild-brier bush.
He remembered too late, on his thorny green bed,
Much that well may be thought cannot wisely be said.

T. L. Peacock.

THE WISE MEN OF GOTHAM

In a bowl to sea went wise men three,
On a brilliant night of June;
They carried a net, and their hearts were set
On fishing up the moon.

The sea was calm, the air was balm,
Not a breath stirred low or high,
And the moon, I trow, lay as bright below,
And as round as in the sky.

The wise men with the current went,
Nor paddle nor oar had they,
And still as the grave they went on the wave,
That they might not disturb their prey.

Far, far at sea, were the wise men three,
When their fishing-net they threw;
And at the throw, the moon below
In a thousand fragments flew.

The sea was bright with a dancing light
Of a million million gleams,
Which the broken moon shot forth as soon
As the net disturbed her beams.

They drew in their net; it was empty and wet,
And they had lost their pain;
Soon ceased the play of each dancing ray,
And the image was round again.

Three times they threw, three times they drew,
And all the while were mute;
And evermore their wonder grew,
Till they could not but dispute.

Their silence they broke, and each one spoke
Full long, and loud, and clear;
A man at sea their voices three
Full three leagues off might hear.

The three wise men got home again
To their children and their wives;
But, touching their trip, and their net's vain dip,
They disputed all their lives.

The wise men three could never agree,
Why they missed the promised boon;
They agreed alone that their net they had thrown,
And they had not caught the moon.

T. L. Peacock.

THE MONK FELIX

One morning, all alone,
Out of his convent of grey stone,
Into the forest older, darker, greyer,
His lips moving as if in prayer,
His head sunken upon his breast
As in a dream of rest,
Walked the monk Felix. All about
The broad, sweet sunshine lay without,
Filling the summer air;
And within the woodlands as he trod,
The twilight was like the Truce of God
With worldly woe and care;
Under him lay the golden moss;
And above him the boughs of hemlock-trees
Waved, and made the sign of the cross,

And whispered their Benedicites;
And from the ground
Rose an odour sweet and fragrant
Of the wild-flowers and the vagrant
Vines that wandered,
Seeking the sunshine, round and round.

These he heeded not, but pondered
On the volume in his hand,
A volume of St. Augustine
Wherein he read of the unseen
Splendours of God's great town
In the unknown land,
And, with his eyes cast down
In humility, he said:
"I believe, O God
What herein I have read,
But, alas! I do not understand!"
And lo! he heard
The sudden singing of a bird,
A snow-white bird, that from a cloud
Dropped down,
And among the branches brown
Sat singing
So sweet, and clear, and loud,
It seemed a thousand harp-strings ringing,
And the Monk Felix closed his book.
And long, long,
With rapturous look,
He listened to the song,
And hardly breathed or stirred,
Until he saw, as in a vision,
The land Elysian,
And in the heavenly city heard
Angelic feet
Fall on the golden flagging of the street.
And he would fain
Have caught the wondrous bird,
But strove in vain;

For it flew away, away,
Far over hill and dell,
And instead of its sweet singing
He heard the convent bell
Suddenly in the silence ringing
For the service of noonday.
And he retraced
His pathway homeward sadly and in haste.

In the convent there was a change!
He looked for each well-known face,
But the faces were new and strange;
New figures sat in the oaken stalls,
New voices chanted in the choir;
Yet the place was the same place.
The same dusky walls
Of cold, grey stone,
The same cloisters and belfry and spire.
A stranger and alone
Among that brotherhood
The Monk Felix stood.
"Forty years," said a Friar,
"Have I been Prior
Of this convent in the wood,
But for that space
Never have I beheld thy face!"
The heart of the Monk Felix fell;
And he answered, with submissive tone,
"This morning, after the hour of Prime,
I left my cell,
And wandered forth alone,
Listening all the time
To the melodious singing
Of a beautiful white bird,
Until I heard
The bells of the convent ringing
Noon from their noisy towers,
It was as if I dreamed;
For what to me had seemed
Moments only, had been hours!"

"Years," said a voice close by.
It was an aged monk who spoke,
From a bench of oak
Fastened against the wall;—
He was the oldest monk of all.
For a whole century
Had he been there,
Seeking God in prayer,
The meekest and humblest of his creatures.
He remembered well the features
Of Felix, and he said,
Speaking distinct and slow;
"One hundred years ago,
When I was a novice in this place,
There was here a monk, full of God's grace,
Who bore the name
Of Felix, and this man must be the same.

And straightway
They brought back to the light of day
A volume old and brown,
A huge tome, bound
In brass and wild-boar's hide,
Wherein were written down
The names of all who had died
In the convent, since it was edified.
And there they found,
Just as the old monk said,
That on a certain day and date,
One hundred years before,
Had gone forth from the convent gate
The Monk Felix, and never more
Had entered that sacred door.
He had been counted among the dead!
And they knew, at last,
That such had been the power
Of that celestial and immortal song,
A hundred years had passed,
And had not seemed so long
As a single hour!

H. W. Longfellow.

THE JACKDAW OF RHEIMS

The Jackdaw sat on the Cardinal's chair!
Bishop and abbot, and prior were there;
Many a monk, and many a friar,
Many a knight, and many a squire,
With a great many more of lesser degree,—
In sooth a goodly company;
And they served the Lord Primate on bended knee.
Never, I ween,
Was a prouder seen,
Read of in books, or dreamt of in dreams,
Than the Cardinal Lord Archbishop of Rheims!

In and out
Through the motley rout,
That little Jackdaw kept hopping about;
Here and there
Like a dog in a fair,
Over comfits and cates,
And dishes and plates,
Cowl and cope, and rochet and pall,
Mitre and crosier, he hopp'd upon all!
With saucy air,
He perch'd on the chair
Where, in state, the great Lord Cardinal sat
In the great Lord Cardinal's great red hat;
And he peer'd in the face
Of his Lordship's Grace,
With a satisfied look, as if he would say,
"We two are the greatest folks here to-day!"
And the priests, with awe,
As such freaks they saw,
Said, "The Devil must be in that little Jackdaw!"
The feast was over, the board was clear'd,
The flawns and the custards had all disappear'd,
And six little Singing-boys,—dear little souls!
In nice clean faces, and nice white stoles,
Came, in order due,
Two by two,
Marching that grand refectory through.

A nice little boy held a golden ewer,
Emboss'd and fill'd with water, as pure
As any that flows between Rheims and Namur,
Which a nice little boy stood ready to catch
In a fine golden hand-basin made to match.

Two nice little boys, rather more grown,
Carried lavender-water, and eau de Cologne;
And a nice little boy had a nice cake of soap,
Worthy of washing the hands of the Pope.
One little boy more
A napkin bore,
Of the best white diaper, fringed with pink,
And a Cardinal's Hat mark'd in "permanent ink."

The great Lord Cardinal turns at the sight
Of these nice little boys dress'd all in white:
From his finger he draws
His costly turquoise;
And, not thinking at all about little Jackdaws,
Deposits it straight
By the side of his plate,
While the nice little boys on his Eminence wait;
Till, when nobody's dreaming of any such thing,
That little Jackdaw hops off with the ring!

There's a cry and a shout,
And a deuce of a rout,
And nobody seems to know what they're about,
But the monks have their pockets all turn'd inside out;
The friars are kneeling,
And hunting, and feeling
The carpet, the floor, and the walls, and the ceiling.
The Cardinal drew
Off each plum-colour'd shoe,
And left his red stockings exposed to the view;
He peeps, and he feels
In the toes and the heels;
They turn up the dishes,—they turn up the plates,—
They take up the poker and poke out the grates,
—They turn up the rugs,
They examine the mugs:—

But, no!—no such thing;—
They can't find THE RING!
And the Abbot declared that, "when nobody twigg'd it
Some rascal or other had popp'd in, and prigg'd it!"

The Cardinal rose with a dignified look,
He call'd for his candle, his bell, and his book.
In holy anger, and pious grief,
He solemnly cursed that rascally thief.
He cursed him at board, he cursed him in bed;
From the sole of his foot to the crown of his head;
He cursed him in sleeping, that every night
He should dream of the devil, and wake in a fright;
He cursed him in eating, he cursed him in drinking,
He cursed him in coughing, in sneezing, in winking;
He cursed him in sitting, in standing, in lying;
He cursed him in walking, in riding, in flying,
He cursed him in living, he cursed him in dying—
Never was heard such a terrible curse!
But what gave rise
To no little surprise,
Nobody seemed one penny the worse!

The day was gone,
The night came on,
The Monks and the Friars they search'd till dawn,
When the Sacristan saw,
On crumpled claw,
Come limping a poor little lame Jackdaw!
No longer gay,
As on yesterday;
His feathers all seem'd to be turn'd the wrong way;—
His pinions droop'd—he could hardly stand,—
His head was as bald as the palm of your hand;
His eye so dim,
So wasted each limb,
That, heedless of grammar, they all cried, "THAT'S HIM!—
That's the scamp that has done this scandalous thing!
That's the thief that has got my Lord Cardinal's Ring!"
The poor little Jackdaw,
When the monks he saw,

Feebly gave vent to the ghost of a caw;
And turn'd his bald head, as much as to say,
"Pray, be so good as to walk this way!"
Slower and slower
He limp'd on before,
Till they came to the back of the belfry door,
Where the first thing they saw,
Midst the sticks and the straw,
Was the RING in the nest of that little Jackdaw!

Then the great Lord Cardinal call'd for his book,
And off that terrible curse he took;
The mute expression
Served in lieu of confession,
And, being thus coupled with full restitution,
The Jackdaw got plenary absolution.
—When those words were heard,
That poor little bird
Was so changed in a moment, 'twas really absurd,
He grew sleek, and fat;
In addition to that,
A fresh crop of feathers came thick as a mat.
His tail waggled more
Even than before;
But no longer it wagg'd with an impudent air,
No longer he perch'd on the Cardinal's chair.

He hopp'd now about
With a gait devout;
At Matins, at Vespers, he never was out;
And, so far from any more pilfering deeds,
He always seem'd telling the Confessor's beads.
If any one lied,—or if any one swore,—
Or slumber'd in pray'r-time and happen'd to snore,
That good Jackdaw
Would give a great "Caw!"
As much as to say, "Don't do so any more!"
While many remark'd, as his manners they saw,
That they "never had known such a pious Jackdaw!"
He long lived the pride
Of that country side,

And at last in the odour of sanctity died;
When, as words were too faint
His merits to paint,
The Conclave determined to make him a Saint;
And on newly-made Saints and Popes, as you know,
It's the custom, at Rome, new names to bestow,
So they canonized him by the name of Jim Crow.

R. H. Barham.

THE QUANGLE WANGLE'S HAT

On the top of the Crumpetty Tree
The Quangle Wangle sat,
But his face you could not see,
On Account of his Beaver Hat.
For his Hat was a hundred and two feet wide,
With ribbons and bibbons on every side,
And bells, and buttons, and loops and lace,
So that nobody ever could see the face
Of the Quangle Wangle Quee.

The Quangle Wangle said
To himself on the Crumpetty Tree,—
"Jam; and Jelly; and bread;
Are the best of food for me!
But the longer I live on this Crumpetty Tree,
The plainer than ever it seems to me
That very few people come this way,
And that life on the whole is far from gay!"
Said the Quangle Wangle Quee.

But there came to the Crumpetty Tree
Mr. and Mrs. Canary;
And they said,—"Did ever you see
Any spot so charmingly airy?
May we build a nest on your lovely Hat?
Mr. Quangle Wangle, grant us that!
O please let us come and build a nest
Of whatever material suits you best,
Mr. Quangle Wangle Quee!"

And besides, to the Crumpetty Tree
Came the Stork, the Duck, and the Owl;
The Snail and the Bumble-Bee,
The Frog and the Fimble Fowl;
(The Fimble Fowl, with a Corkscrew leg;)
And all of them said,—"We humbly beg,
We may build our homes on your lovely Hat,—
Mr. Quangle Wangle, grant us that!
Mr. Quangle Wangle Quee!"

And the Golden Grouse came there,
And the Pobble who has no toes,—
And the small Olympian Bear,—
And the Dong with a luminous nose,
And the Blue Baboon, who played the flute,—
And the Orient Calf from the Land of Tute,—
And the Attery Squash, and the Bisky Bat,—
All came and built on the lovely Hat
Of the Quangle Wangle Quee.

And the Quangle Wangle said
To himself on the Crumpetty Tree,—
"When all these creatures move
What a wonderful noise there'll be!"
And at night by the light of the Mulberry Moon
They danced to the Flute of the Blue Baboon,
On the broad green leaves of the Crumpetty Tree,
And all were as happy as happy could be,
With the Quangle Wangle Quee.

E. Lear.

FATHER GILLIGAN

The old priest, Father Gilligan,
Was weary night and day,
For half his flock were in their beds,
Or under green sods lay.

Once while he nodded on a chair,
At the moth hour of eve,
Another poor man sent for him,
And he began to grieve.

" I have no rest, nor joy, nor peace,
For people die and die ";
And after, cried he, " God forgive!
My body spake, not I!"

And then, half lying on the chair,
He knelt, prayed, fell asleep;
And the moth hour went from the fields,
And the stars began to peep.

They slowly into millions grew,
And leaves shook in the wind,
And God covered the world with shade,
And whispered to mankind.

Upon the time of sparrow chirp,
When the moths came once more,
The old priest Peter Gilligan
Stood upright on the floor.

" Mavrone, Mavrone! the man has died
While I slept on the chair."
He roused his horse out of its sleep
And rode with little care.

He rode now as he never rode,
By rocky lane and fen;
The sick man's wife opened the door:
" Father, you come again!"

" And is the poor man dead? " he cried.
" He died an hour ago."
The old Priest Peter Gilligan
In grief swayed to and fro.

" When you were gone he turned and died,
As merry as a bird."
The old priest Peter Gilligan,
He knelt him at that word.

" He that hath made the night of stars,
For souls who tire and bleed,
Sent one of His great angels down,
To help me in my need.

" He who is wrapped in purple robes,
With planets in His care,
Had pity on the least of things
Asleep upon a chair."

W. B. YEATS.

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